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Minister Dupuy announces agreement on Manitou Mounds National Historic Site

EMO, Ontario, May 19, 1995 - The Honourable Michel Dupuy, Minister of Canadian Heritage, today announced that agreement has been reached on the development of Manitou Mounds National Historic Site near Fort Frances, Ontario.

The federal government and the government of Ontario have agreed to each contribute $1.3 million over three years towards protection and presentation of the cultural resources associated with this nationally significant site situated on the Rainy River. The site is anticipated to open in the summer of 1996.

Manitou Mounds represents more than 5,000 years of Aboriginal culture and history in the Rainy River area, including evidence of two cultures which built earthen mounds as monuments to their dead the Laurel Culture (300 B.C. - A.D. 1100) and the Blackduck Culture (A.D. 800 - 1600). The site area was also used during the fur trade and into the early 20th century.

"I am pleased that a significant place representing Canadian Aboriginal history will be conserved and interpreted for all Canadians, in partnership with the Province of Ontario and with Aboriginal people," said Minister Dupuy. "The site is an impressive testament to the historical identity of Canada's aboriginal peoples that is so deeply rooted in the community. Canadians are proud of the contributions made by our cultural communities of past and future in strengthening and preserving Canada's unique cultural and natural heritage," he added.

Manitou Mounds Heritage Centre will be developed by the Rainy River First Nations with assistance from the federal and provincial governments. The main features of the Centre to be owned and managed by the First Nation, will be a visitor centre and associated infrastructure, exhibit galleries, a trail network linking the visitor centre and the mounds area, and cultural and historical activities.

Mr. Robert Nault, M.P., Kenora - Rainy River was present for the announcement. "The Rainy River First Nations have been very supportive of efforts to protect the site area for more than 25 years. The Heritage Centre will contribute significantly to strengthening the cultural vitality of the area as well as the local and regional economy", he stated. "The site is an investment in our future".

Canada's national historic sites system comprises over 750 national historic sites. Funding for this project was provided for from the National Cost - Sharing Program administered by Parks Canada's National Historic Sites Directorate within the February 1995 federal fiscal framework. This initiative is an example of how this government is working with Canadians and with other levels of government to commemorate the cultural heritage of Canada.

Information:

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